

REMARKS

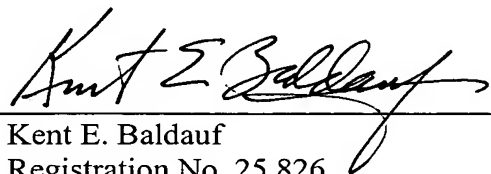
The specification and claims have been amended to place the application in conformance with standard United States patent practice.

Examination and allowance of pending claims 1-45 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

WEBB ZIESENHEIM LOGSDON
ORKIN & HANSON, P.C.

By



Kent E. Baldauf
Registration No. 25,826
Attorney for Applicants
700 Koppers Building
436 Seventh Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1818
Telephone: 412-471-8815
Facsimile: 412-471-4094

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MARKED-UP VERSION

Please amend claim 3 as follows:

3. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 1 [or 2], wherein a white-colored noble metal coating layer is formed in a thickness ranging from 0.04 to 0.3 μ m by a dry plating process on the surface of the stainless steel coating layer.

Please amend claim 7 as follows:

7. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 2 [or 6], wherein the underlying plating layer comprises a coating layer which is formed by a wet plating process and is composed of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of gold, copper, nickel, chromium, tin, palladium, nickel-phosphorus alloys, nickel alloys excluding nickel-phosphorus alloys, copper-tin-palladium alloys, copper alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys, tin alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys, and palladium alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys.

Please amend claim 9 as follows:

9. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 2 [or 6], wherein the underlying plating layer is a coating layer formed by a wet plating process and composed of at least one nickel-free metal selected from the group consisting of gold, copper, chromium, tin, palladium, copper-tin-palladium alloys, copper alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys, tin alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys, and palladium alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys.

Please amend claim 10 as follows:

10. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 2 [or 6], wherein the underlying plating layer is a coating layer formed by a dry plating process and is composed of titanium carbide, zirconium carbide, or tantalum carbide.

Please amend claim 11 as follows:

11. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 2, [and 6 to 10,] wherein the underlying plating layer has an entire thickness ranging from 0.2 to 30 μm .

Please amend claim 12 as follows:

12. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white surface coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 3], wherein the white-colored stainless steel coating layer is composed of an austenitic stainless steel having a composition of 0.01-0.12 vol% of carbon, 0.1-1.0 vol% of silicon, 1.0-2.5 vol% of manganese, 8-22 vol% of nickel, and 15-26 vol% of chromium.

Please amend claim 13 as follows:

13. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 3], wherein the white-colored stainless steel coating layer is composed of a nickel-free ferritic stainless steel having a composition of 0.01-0.12 vol% of carbon, 0.1-1.0 vol% of silicon, 1.0-2.5 vol% of manganese, 14-20 vol% of chromium, and 0.4-2.5 vol% of molybdenum.

Please amend claim 14 as follows:

14. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 3, and 12 and 13], wherein the white-colored stainless steel coating layer is formed by a dry plating process selected from a sputtering method, an arc evaporation method, or an ion-plating method.

Please amend claim 15 as follows:

15. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 14], wherein the stainless steel coating layer has a thickness ranging from 0.1 to 2.0 μm .

Please amend claim 16 as follows:

16. (Amended) The personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 15], wherein, on the surface of the base article or of the underlying plating layer, at least one plating layer different in color tone from the white-colored stainless steel coating layer is formed by a dry plating process in addition to the stainless steel coating layer formed by a dry plating process.

Please amend claim 21 as follows:

21. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 19 [or 20], which further comprises, after the formation of the white-colored stainless steel coating layer, the step of forming a white-colored noble metal coating layer in a thickness ranging from 0.04 to 0.3 μ m by a dry plating process on the surface of the stainless steel coating layer.

Please amend claim 25 as follows:

25. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 20 [or 24], wherein the underlying plating layer is formed by a wet plating process from at least one metal selected from the group consisting of gold, copper, nickel, chromium, tin, palladium, nickel-phosphorus alloys, nickel alloys excluding nickel-phosphorus alloys, copper-tin-palladium alloys, copper alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys, tin alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys, and palladium alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys.

Please amend claim 27 as follows:

27. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 20 [or 24], wherein the underlying plating layer is formed by a wet plating process from at least one nickel-free metal selected from the group consisting of gold, copper, chromium, tin, palladium, copper-tin-palladium alloys, copper alloys excluding

copper-tin-palladium alloys, tin alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys, and palladium alloys excluding copper-tin-palladium alloys.

Please amend claim 28 as follows:

28. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to claim 20 [or 24], wherein the underlying plating layer is formed from titanium carbide, zirconium carbide or tantalum carbide by a dry plating process.

Please amend claim 29 as follows:

29. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 20, [and 24 to 28,] wherein the underlying plating layer has an entire thickness of ranging from 0.2 to 30 μ m.

Please amend claim 30 as follows:

30. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 19 [to 21], wherein the white-colored stainless steel coating layer is composed of an austenitic stainless steel having a composition of 0.01-0.12 vol% of carbon, 0.1-1.0 vol% of silicon, 1.0-2.5 vol% of manganese, 8-22 vol% of nickel and 15-26 vol% of chromium; and is formed by a sputtering method, an arc evaporation method or an ion plating method.

Please amend claim 31 as follows:

31. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 19 [to 21], wherein the white-colored stainless steel coating layer is composed of a nickel-free ferritic stainless steel having a composition of 0.01-0.12 vol% of carbon, 0.1-1.0 vol% of silicon, 1.0-2.5 vol% of manganese, 14-20 vol% of chromium, and 0.4-2.5 vol% of molybdenum; and is formed by a sputtering method, an arc evaporation method, or an ion plating method.

Please amend claim 32 as follows:

32. (Amended) The process for producing a personal ornament having a white coating layer according to [any of claims] claim 19, [20, and 22 to 31,] which further comprises,

after the steps of forming a white-colored stainless steel coating layer on the surface of the ornament base article or of the underlying coating layer,

at least once the steps of:

masking a part of the stainless steel coating layer,

forming a plating layer different in color tone from the stainless steel coating layer on the surface of the stainless steel coating layer and the surface of the mask by a dry plating process, and

removing the mask and the coating layer on the mask,

to thereby provide an outermost plating layer having a white-colored stainless steel coating layer portion and at least one plating layer portion different in color tone from the stainless steel coating layer.